

## Market News

## North American fibre optic components market to reach US\$6.1 billion by 2003

THE North American market for fibre optic components is predicted to grow from US\$2.8 billion in 1999 to US\$6.1 billion in 2003, an overall annual growth rate of 18.5%.

The estimate comes in the report *The Market for Optical Components: A Ten-Year Forecast* from market research firm Communications Industry Researchers Inc (CIR) of Charlottesville, VA, USA, based on a survey of manufacturers of optical components including those in the laser, detector, WDM, amplifier and optical

switch segments. CIR says growth rates in different segments of market will vary significantly, with the fastest growing area expected to be for optical switching components which are tipped to grow at 67%/year. The report says that while the 'all-optical network (AON)' will not be entirely commercialized for more than a decade, optical switching will begin to become mainstream in the next few years.

Good growth is also forecast for WDM components, tipped to have a market value of \$318 million by 2003. Not all of

the segments of the optical components market will be quite as exciting, however, with CIR forecasting that the market for LEDs will grow at only 8.5% during the next four years - reflecting the emergence of low-cost laser products.

CIR notes that much of the optical components market is accounted for by market segments that already contain a handful of dominant firms. It believes there will still be room for innovative new companies, however, particularly with the opportunities emerging for in-

novators in the laser, WDM, optical switching and fibre segments of the market. It says companies such as Astarte (optical switching) and SpecTran (fibre) are already exploiting such opportunities, for example.

The report also stresses that service providers are seriously looking into fibre to the curb and home applications, while some major end users are considering fibre to the desk.

The report is priced at \$4000.

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